



# Representative John Turner

District 114 | Town Hall Meetings | June 2019

## 86th Legislative Session | Headline Legislation

**School finance reform.** House Bill 3 provides \$6.5 billion in new funding for our schools. At least 30% of the new funding must be used for pay raises for teachers, counselors, librarians, nurses, and other non-administrator school employees.

Formula elements are changed to provide additional funding for special education, students with dyslexia, and career and technical education in junior high grades, among other changes. School districts will be required to offer full-day pre-K to eligible 4-year-old children. Districts will receive additional funding for each student who meets certain college, career, or military readiness standards upon graduation from high school.

The bill also includes \$5 billion in property tax relief. This will reduce property tax rates for both Dallas and Richardson ISDs by 11 cents in 2020 and by an additional penny in 2021.

J. Turner Vote: YES

**The state budget.** House Bill 1 appropriates over \$250 billion over the next two years to address the important priorities of state government. In addition to significant new funds for public education, the budget includes increased support over the last biennium's budget for:

- ❖ Early Childhood Intervention, a statewide program for young children with developmental delays or disabilities
- ❖ Graduate medical education
- ❖ Salary increases for certain state employees

- ❖ Disaster relief and preparation
- ❖ Anti-human trafficking efforts

J. Turner Vote: YES

**Support for retired teachers.** Senate Bills 12 and 500 shore up the TRS pension fund through increased contributions and provide a "13th check" of \$2,000 for each enrolled retired teacher in 2020. The Legislature also dedicated additional funds to cover shortfalls in the retired teacher healthcare system (TRS-Care) and to avoid further premium increases for retirees.

J. Turner Vote: YES

**Mental health.** A number of bills seek to enhance mental health resources for public school students. Collectively, this legislation will require additional mental training for school personnel, place trained professionals at regional education service centers, and create the Texas Mental Health Care Consortium to expand access to care through telehealth and a child psychiatry access network.

J. Turner Vote: YES

**Disaster recovery and mitigation.** A series of bills will bolster Texas's ability to recover from disasters such as Hurricane Harvey, and help prepare for future severe weather and flooding events. These efforts include a new program to expedite debris removal, a specialized disaster recovery task force, and a flood infrastructure fund for future flood mitigation projects.

J. Turner Vote: YES

## Other Selected Significant Bills

**Surprise medical billing.** Billing disputes between an insurance company and an out-of-network provider must be resolved through arbitration, without billing the patient for the balance or involving the patient in the dispute.

SB 1264 | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Investigating sexual assault cases.** The statute of limitations for sexual assault cases is lengthened. Local authorities must do an audit of untested sexual assault forensic evidence, and must conduct proper tests of such evidence within specified time periods.

HB 8 | J. Turner Vote: YES



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**Pipeline safety.** Following the tragic explosions in west Dallas, natural gas pipeline operators may no longer use cast-iron or bare steel pipelines, and must replace all existing cast-iron pipelines on an accelerated schedule. Operators must provide prompt notice of pipeline safety incidents.

HB 864 & HB 866 | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Funding for state parks and historical sites.** If approved by voters in November, revenue collected from the sporting goods sales tax will be dedicated to support of state parks and state historical sites.

SB 26 | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Compassionate Use Program.** The current program to allow use of low-THC cannabis is expanded to include patients with terminal cancer, ALS, autism, and incurable neurodegenerative diseases

HB 3703 | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Managed care oversight.** A series of amendments to various bills will improve oversight of managed care companies that contract with the state to provide Medicaid services.

Various bills | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Tobacco 21.** The age to legally purchase cigarette and tobacco products is raised from 18 to 21. Those serving in the U.S. military or National Guard are exempted.

SB 21 | J. Turner Vote: YES

**Local governance.** City and county governments must receive voter approval in a special election in order to collect over 3.5% more total property tax revenue than they collected in the previous year, with certain exceptions. Previously, voters could petition for a special election if collections were 8% higher than in the previous year.

SB 2 | J. Turner Vote: NO

## Selected Bills and Amendments Authored by Rep. Turner, Passed Into Law

### **SB 1679 | Pre-K eligibility (identical Senate companion to House bill)**

Provides that children who qualify for 3-year-old pre-kindergarten are automatically eligible for pre-K as 4-year-olds, without their families having to re-prove their eligibility; will eliminate unnecessary paperwork and staff time

### **HB 2143 | Worker's compensation for PTSD for first responders**

Allows first responders to receive worker's compensation benefits if they experience PTSD due to exposure to multiple traumatic events on the job

### **HB 3635 | First responder survivor benefits**

Ties benefits paid to the surviving family of a first responder who is killed in the line of duty to inflation, ensuring that the value of these benefits does not diminish over time

### **SB 2200 | Background checks for child & elder care workers (identical Senate companion to House bill)**

Ensures that state agencies can continue to work with the FBI to perform criminal background checks on individuals who work in child-care and elder-care settings

### **Amendment No. 61 (HB 3) | Gifted & talented programs**

Requires school districts to continue to report how much they are spending on gifted and talented programs

### **HHSC budget rider #95 | Children's Advocacy Centers**

Increases appropriation to Children's Advocacy Centers by \$10+ million to address backlogs in delivering services to thousands of child victims of crime

### **Amendment to SB 2**

Promotes transparency by adding to the ballot proposition for proposed property tax rates the preceding year's tax rate, alongside the proposed rate

### **DSHS budget rider # 30 | Vaccines**

Modifies a program that delivers vaccines to uninsured adults, to provide that any unused vaccines can be made available to elderly adults who are on Medicare but whose coverage does not include vaccinations